



**Convention on the Elimination
of all Forms of Discrimination
Against Women**

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women (CEDAW)

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States Parties

MALI

I. INTRODUCTION

In his memorandum No. SD 3012/8 dated 14 October 1985, the Secretary-General of the United Nations requested the Government of Mali to transmit to the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at the Vienna International Centre its report on legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention.

In response to this request, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation of the Republic of Mali has the honour to inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures in force in Mali regarding discrimination against women.

II. OBSERVATIONS

Since the Republic of Mali acquired its national and international sovereignty, it has sought to protect human rights in general and the rights of women in particular. Thus important constitutional, legislative, judicial and administrative measures have been adopted in favour of women.

A. Constitutional provisions

The preamble to the Mali Constitution states: "The people of Mali solemnly proclaim the Republic of Mali, founded on the ideal of liberty and justice".

"The Republic of Mali solemnly reaffirms the rights and liberties of man and the citizen as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948".

The following is to be found in the main body of the Constitution:

Article 1, paragraph 5:

"The Republic of Mali ensures equality before the law for everyone, regardless of origin, race, language, sex, religion or belief".

Later:

Article 12:

"Education is a right of all Malians. It is non-denominational and public".

Article 13:

"The Republic of Mali guarantees its citizens under the law:

- The right to work;
- Equality of employment;
- The right to leisure, social assistance and education".

Article 16:

"All citizens, regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex or opinion may vote or be elected under the conditions set out by law".

B. Legislative provisions

Law 62-17/AN-RM of 3 February 1962 containing the marriage and guardianship code forbids repudiation of a wife (article 58). This law also reflects the effort made by the legislator to ensure a proper balance between the rights and duties of each spouse.

The same law gives the wife guardianship of the children in the event of the death of her husband.

Article 23 of law No. 62-18 of 3 February 1962 containing the Malian nationality code offers a woman of foreign nationality the opportunity of acquiring Malian nationality, if she so wishes, in the event of marriage to a Malian.

Law No. 62-67/AN-RM of 9 August 1962 containing the labour code stipulates the equality of all citizens with regard to employment, and article 285 thereof gives married women the right to belong to trade unions without the authorization of their husbands and to participate in their administration or management.

Judicial measures

In the judicial area, one of the governing principles is the equality of all Malian citizens with regard to the public administration of justice, as stipulated in article 1 of the Constitution: "Women have the same rights as men to initiate judicial proceedings".

C. Administrative measures

There is no discrimination against women in the administrative hierarchy. They occupy posts in the Government and administer technical departments.

D. Political measures

From a political and social standpoint, since Mali is essentially a democratic country, Malian women are organized in the National Union of Malian Women and are active within the Party, the Democratic Union of the Malian People, and its subsidiary democratic organizations.

Within all these organizations, women hold posts of responsibility: they may, for example, stand for office in the Central Executive Bureau of the Party, the National Council and the National Assembly, and in all sections of the Party.

CONCLUSION

As regards civil rights, Malian women suffer no discrimination and enjoy full legal powers, with the exception of business matters; here they are required to obtain their husbands' agreement before setting up in trade. However, although the genuine political will exists to provide women with all the protection they need, it comes up against customs which remain deeply rooted in tradition.

13 October 1986